

Ethaykad canal in Madapalli pakuthi.

15. **Mrs. Threßsiamma Kora :** Will the Government be pleased to state whether they are aware that the Ethaykad canal in Madapalli pakuthi is silted up and has become useless for cultivators ?

Dewan Bahadur L. Venkatakrisnan : No.

President : Order, order. I find that a good many, roughly about eleven, motions for adjournment of the House have been sent to me. Considering the fact that the House sits only for two days and that some of these points are really urgent, I might deal with the whole matter in a statement leaving honourable members to press or not to press the motions afterwards as they might be advised.

Some of the points are of importance to the whole State and I am sure that this honourable House would like to know the policy of the Government in regard to those matters.

Firstly, I find from some of the matters brought to the notice of the Government that there is great apprehension as to the short-fall in the matter of textiles and the distribution of yarn. As I was explaining elsewhere, Government are glad to be able to announce now, that on account of the urgent request made by this Government in respect of the textile position in the State and the inadequate supply of textiles allotted to us compared with our population and our needs and the particular sartorial habits of our people, the Government of India have made a fairly big move. During January, February and March, we got only about 400 bales per month on an average and these 400 bales had to be distributed amongst 8,000 retail licensees. That gave rise to tremendous discontentment ; and the scarcity was obvious, so much so, that persons went about saying, as is happening in Bengal or is reported to be happening there, that the people of the State will go about naked and conduct processions of naked men and women. I do not think there is any need for apprehension of any such catastrophe happening, because, I am able to announce to this honourable House that from June onwards we shall be able to get textiles not only from Bombay, which was the original venue, but from Ahmedbad, Sholapur and other places, and the total now made available will be thrice the quantity per month *viz.* about 1,200 bales that we got in January, February and March. We shall get that from June onwards and therefore I expect that the textile position will greatly improve.

[President]

With regard to the Yarn position, there was considerable discussion in the other House and various charges were made about mistakes in the nomination of committees here or the selection of the co-operative movement as an agency there, and so on and so forth. It is not my purpose to go into the merits of the controversy or express an opinion on the matter. Suffice it to say that Government feel convinced that there was not only great scarcity of yarn, but also an urgent necessity to make the actual distribution of yarn much more public and wellknown than it has been hitherto so that there might be no room for complaints or allegations of biased favouritism or inequitable conduct.

One of the difficulties confronting Government in the matter of yarn has been this. Government have been most anxious to utilise the co-operative agencies as far as possible in all these new ventures, as the co-operative agency is, from the point of view of theory, though not so much in practice, in touch with the people. It was considered that for the distribution of food stuffs or textiles or yarn, the utilisation of the co-operative agencies would probably be most expedient. We made an experiment in regard to food stuffs ; that experiment cannot be described to be a conspicuous success and we had to give up that experiment at one stage. Attempts have been made for the distribution of yarn utilising the co-operative movement. Certain charges were made that defunct co-operative societies suddenly reanimated themselves and on the basis of such resurrection desired quotas to be given to them. It was alleged that they got a certain number of members enrolled fresh in the hope that by becoming members of the co operative movement they would get yarn ; that these persons turned after having joined as members and sold the yarn in the black market. Various suggestions were also put forward to bring about an equitable system of distribution. Finally, Government may aver that the question of the Taluk or local committees will be reconsidered from every point of view and having regard to the criticisms voiced in public, in the newspaper, Press, as well as on the floor of the Legislature, and that as suits particular localities either an influential or, what is more important than influential, a really active taluk committee will be brought into operation. In order, generally, to supervise these operations, it was decided and accepted with a certain amount of alacrity elsewhere that there should be a committee of seven or eight people advising the Textile Commissioner. It was decided that three members of that Committee should be nominated by the Assembly and two by this honourable House. I shall therefore invite honourable members to elect

two persons to serve on this textiles and Yarn Committee. These five, with the addition of one or two people who are specially acquainted with the business, will be a central Committee and they will make suggestions for the purpose of the formation, continuance and the implementing of the proposals of the Government in regard to the mofussil centres which will be given due attention. That is what I wish to say as to textile and yarn control ; and that is the subject of one of the adjournment motions.

So far as the non-availability of yarn is concerned, representations have been very formally made to the Government of India and it has been pointed out to them that this is probably the one unit in India where the hand-loom industry is most effectively functioning and that a large number of persons, literally tens of thousands of people, really depend upon this industry as the sole means of subsistence. I hope now that a basic supply will be forthcoming and honourable members may take it from me that every step will be made to contact the Government of India and to impress upon them the urgency of the matter.

There has been another matter which I wish to bring to the notice of the honourable House—the coir situation. Honourable members are fully aware of those circumstances, though I am surprised that an adjournment motion on the matter has been given by one who is acquainted with the inner secrets of the coir industry. The facts of the matter are that the Government of Great Britain are in urgent need of large supplies of coir products for the purpose of the War. In order to get those supplies, they suggested certain arrangements. This Government were not willing, having regard to their commitments as to food stuffs, eggs, tapioca, yarn and textiles, to bring into effect the policy of controlling coir, and therefore, they invited the Government of India to get into contact with the Coir trade. They did so and they were not very successful in their efforts. Certain things happened into which I need not enter, as a result of which the Government of the United States and Great Britain were taking steps to prohibit the import of coir products into America or England altogether. That was the state of things which would have meant complete collapse of the Coir industry and therefore the Government had to step in in the interests of the large body of persons who depended upon the Coir industry, and negotiations were set on foot. The Government were forced to confront this position. There is no doubt, and that is a matter which must be very carefully borne in mind by the honourable members and every one who is interested in this industry—which means practically a considerable portion of the people of the State—that the Coir industry has a bright future before it, because in the first place, many of the devastated

[President]

countries in Europe are unable to afford the utilisation of materials which till now they have been utilising, such as carpets and various kinds of rugs and so forth. Many of those countries, for example, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and France, will have to depend upon Coir. This Government was most anxious that the trade in Coir of those countries should not be on the basis of any price control. In other words, this Government argued to the Government of India, and I believe that argument is likely to carry weight—I do not wish to commit myself to any more positive statement at this moment—that although there might be control of prices in order to prevent profiteering in respect of war supplies and although Government are willing, for the purpose of ensuring war supplies, to take over coir control and to fix certain ceiling prices, once the war supplies are dealt with, in regard to the supplies to America and the United Kingdom apart from the war, and to other European countries, there should be no restriction of export or import into these countries or any insistence upon any ceiling price or price control. These negotiations took place at a conference at which the representatives of the Government of India and the Cochin Government were present and those negotiations are becoming final now. The net result of these negotiations may be stated as follows. Government will assume control over the Coir trade as a whole.

The reason is this. Government found that in the matter of tapioca and in one or two other commodities our people, in their anxiety to make quick profits, were ruining the possibilities of future trade. Bombay and Ahmedbad Mills were to a large extent indebted to this country for their starch for use in regard to textile production. But it was found just before this Government introduced a ban on the export of tapioca that those Mills and agencies which got tapioca from here were about to cancel their orders because along with the tapioca starch, a considerable amount of sand; a great amount of fibre,—in one consignment sixty per cent. of the contents was found to be either sand or fibre and other extraneous materials were mixed up. The result of it was that the name of the State deteriorated greatly and we were about to lose our trade in tapioca starch. Fortunately or unfortunately,—fortunately as events proved—Government were forced on account of the food situation to come to the conclusion that all exports should be stopped. Tapioca was a standby and during the time that the food situation was serious—a situation which has now greatly eased as honourable members would find—tapioca did not go out. That was advantageous. Now again there is a very great possibility for the improvement in the trade of tapioca starch. During the time when Government were imposing control over tapioca

and over the export of tapioca, other Governments began to employ substitutes for tapioca starch. One of these substitutes was maize, and Hyderabad has started cultivation of maize on a large scale in order to supply the deficiency, created by the scarcity of tapioca to the textile mills in Ahmedabad and Bombay. Thus the manufacture of substitutes went on at so great a pace as to compete with the tapioca starch, for the purpose of the textile trade. But we shall be able to recapture that trade and to maintain that trade when recaptured, only if the materials that go out from the State are certified to be of good quality. Therefore it is that Government have been reluctantly forced to come to the conclusion that not even an ounce of tapioca starch that is produced in bigger establishments or by way of cottage industries should go out of the State without the State seal and after an examination in the State laboratories. Unless we preserve the quality of our tapioca starch at its highest, we shall not be able to capture the Indian trade to the fullest extent possible.

The same remarks apply to coir. Very serious complaints have been levelled against certain practices in regard to coir. Therefore, it would be necessary if we have to build up World trade in coir that we should keep a certain amount of control. The idea of the Government is to fix the prices on the following basis. Take the price of the cocoanut as accrues to the cocoanut grower. Take the price at which the husk is available. Take the stage at which retting takes place. Take the stage at which that retted stuff goes into the hands of the handloom artisan. At every stage allow five to fifteen per cent profit as the case may be so that the profit might not, as now, be solely derived by the middlemen at one stage or the other but might be available also to the other persons. Of course, there are abuses even in that system. Having fixed those prices, Government propose to quote to the Government of India certain prices at which they can supply. We have on account of the circumstances connected with the last contract and the period for which the last contract was entered into, to accept a particular price which was already fixed by mutual consent of the trading interests and the Government of India and that price is probably not as good a price as we might otherwise have got or a price which I am confident we shall get in the future. But all that is happening now is that there are negotiations pending between the Government of India and through the Government of India with the Governments of Great Britain and the United States for the purpose of raising the embargo on the import of coir products and for the purpose of facilitating the fixation of coir control. That is the position so far as coir is concerned.

[President]

Another question that has been raised is in regard to the Government publications of text books, paper, anchal covers and stamps etc. So far as Government publications of text books are concerned, the matter was explained at great length by the Director of Public Instruction. The Director of Public Instruction could only go according to the statistics furnished to him by his Department. He has now found that admissions to the English Schools this year have been practically fifty to seventy-five percent more than those of last year. Whether it is due to the imminence of any educational reconstruction or otherwise, it is difficult to say, but the demand has suddenly been enhanced. Moreover, another phenomenon has come into existence, namely, a certain number of publishers have purchased practically all the books and are apparently sitting on those books (*Laughter*) with a view to have a black market. Instances were brought to our notice to the effect that the prices of certain books which were selling at one rupee each were now selling at five rupees each. Thereupon this Government have come to the conclusion that if a certain number of instances are proved to the satisfaction of the Government, Government will have no alternative excepting to abolish the system of sales through any persons other than through Government agencies. That again is one more instance of control, a control which Government are most reluctant to assume, but there may be no alternative. These are the main matters on which I wanted to say something. I shall now deal with the motions for adjournment.

Mr. G. Ravi Varma has obviously not noticed Rule 21. The right to move for the adjournment of either Chamber for discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance shall be subject to the following restriction; not more than one matter may be discussed on the same motion. The motion of which he has given notice is this: The difficulty experienced by the public in every part of the State, *viz.*, (1) refusal of admission to students (2) want of accommodation (3) absence of furniture (4) non-availability of text books (5) frequent transfers of teachers and (6) want of requisite staff in many Government Schools of the State. This is against the provisions of the Rule because each of these is a separate topic and none of these topics excepting perhaps the refusal of admission, has arisen during the last week or fortnight. It is a matter which is not of urgent public importance. But on the ground that it is a kind of omnibus resolution, which is not permissible under the Rules, I have reluctantly to disallow it, but honourable members may rest assured that all these points will be borne in mind and answers to these questions will be furnished during the Budget debate which will be the next occasion on which this House will meet.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup : Sir, I desire to make an explanation on the adjournment motion over which the President has made some remarks.

President : Do you want any more information? I am suggesting that as this House is electing two members from this Committee, and as I have practically given directions to the Textile Commissioner to act in close conformity with the advice given by this Committee, both with regard to the functions at the centre and in the actual distribution, it may not be necessary to deal with the matter, but it is open for the honourable member to deal with it. Do you want to press it?

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup : On the three adjournment motions I have made, the President has made some remarks.

President : I have dealt with cloth and yarn.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup : There remain coir control Government publications of text books, difficulty in getting anchal covers, court fee stamps and general stamp paper.

The object of my motion regarding coir yarn control was this : As the President remarked, as I am fully aware of the situation, the discussions and the correspondence that this Government had been making with the Imperial Government, I have carefully worded in the last paragraph that control has been made inequitably, viz., prices have been fixed far below the cost of production.

President : Order, order. Apparently, the honourable member is referring to the Rs. 1,750. Contract was entered into with the Mats and Matting Manufacturers' Association and the period of the contract, the promises that have been given by them to the Government of India have all to be considered, and we have to implement the agreements already arrived at. Until we get the coir in our hands, we may not be able to deal with all the problems that the honourable member has in mind.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup : Even now the control is exercised. The difficulty is this. As you remarked the control has to be from the very stage of the production of cocoanut to the last stage. Sir, you are fully aware that the soaked husk at Chirayinkil costs Rs. 30 per thousand and for the production of one-candy of coir yarn you require 4,000.....

President : Order, order. I am sorry the thing has not been made clear. We had to make certain concessions to start with in order to get a notification issued by the United States Government and the Government of the United Kingdom cancelled. Honourable members will realise that when the last conference met the United States had issued a notification putting a complete embargo on all import of coir into the United States. The same thing was done by Australia and also by England. We had to

[President.]

give certain concessions in order that those notifications should be cancelled. I am glad to say that the United States are likely to cancel their notification. England has already done so.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup : I want to bring to the notice of Government that when a particular price is fixed for coir yarn, you will have to control the soaked husk, also. Without controlling the soaked husk you cannot get the variety of yarn you require.

President : Do you wish to proceed with the adjournment motion ?

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup : No Sir, I am not pressing them. The object of the first resolution on yarn and cloth control was that the C licences were being issued to all and sundry ; the beedi man, salesmen in big shops and even the clerks in Banks have C licenses and that is why 8,000 C licenses have been issued in Trivandrum alone.

President : Order, order. If there has been any lack of control in respect of the issue of licences, the Committee might go into the question and ask for elucidation. That is probably the best plan.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup : Regarding Court fee Stamps and general stamp papers.....

President : Mr. Financial Secretary.

Mr. S. Narayana Aiyar (*Financial Secretary to Government*) : There is great demand but we do not get the special kind of paper. The Press is working overtime and supplying the paper.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup : It is very difficult for us to get Court Fee Stamps and Stamp Papers. We have to apply in time.

President : Have we not got enough paper for the Registration ?

Mr. S. Narayana Aiyar : No Sir.

President : The honourable member Mr. Kurup may remember this. The Government of India have not yet fully realised that the population of the State is six million. They are slowly realising it for the past fifteen years, but it is taking some time for them to come to full realisation. They have been told, for instance, that six million is roughly 1/60th of the population of the whole of India. Letters have been written on that basis and requests for yarn have been made. Requests for superior paper have also been made, but the result has not been arrived at. As I explained elsewhere, in the matter of consumer goods they supplied four fountain pens on one occasion for the whole of this State where the percentage of literacy is very high and four to the Cochin State. It was

then pointed out that Cochin was a State which had one and a half million people while we had six million. The matter is engaging the earnest attention of the Government of India. These are the difficulties which honourable members in the House may not be fully aware of.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: With regard to Anchal cover and stamps

President: What is the difficulty about anchal covers?

Mr. S. Narayana Aiyar: I don't find any difficulty.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: He may not find any difficulty. But we find difficulty. Especially in Alleppey there was no stamp for seven days

President: It is a very simple matter. As I have already pointed out elsewhere, if the honourable member had pointed out this difficulty sufficiently early, I would have requested the Government of India and got some papers urgently. Hitherto I was not aware of the difficulty mentioned by the honourable member and he tables this adjournment motion after so many days. How many months is it since the difficulty came to the fore? If the honourable member felt the need he could have told me or written to me at once. Secondly, with regard to Anchal covers, this is the first time that I hear about the difficulty.

Mr. S. Narayana Aiyar: It has not been pointed out to us.

President: Order, order. Honourable members do not realise that their function is to be the watchdogs of the public. Assuming that the officers of the Government have not realised the need, and if the honourable member had realised it sufficiently early, he could have brought to the notice of the Head of the Department before he tabled an adjournment motion on the matter.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: Hereafter I shall bring these matters to the notice of the Government.

President: Very well.

Mr. M. Govindan (Nominated): I move that this Council do tender its respectful felicitations to Her Highness The Third Princess of Travancore and Her Consort on their marriage which was solemnised on the 9th May 1945 and pray for their continued prosperity and divine blessings on the members of the Royal Family.

Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai: I second it.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. M. Govindan: This Council records its deep sense of satisfaction at the complete Victory of the Allied Nations over

[Mr. M. Govindan.]

Nazi Germany in Europe and at the glorious part played along with their *confreres* by the Indian Armed Forces in the achievement, and tenders its respectful felicitations to the British Government on the successful termination of the War in Europe.

Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai: I second the resolution.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

**BILLS ASSENTED TO BY HIS HIGHNESS
THE MAHARAJA.**

Secretary: Sir, I beg to report that the following Bills have received the assent of His Highness the Maharaja.

1. The Travancore Town Planning Act (Amendment) Bill.
2. The Travancore Registration Act (Amendment) Bill.
3. The Travancore Bar Council Act (Amendment) Bill.
4. The Travancore Prevention of Begging Bill.
5. Amendments to the First Schedule of the Civil Procedure Code, 1100.

STATEMENT LAID ON THE TABLE.

Mr. S. Narayana Aiyar:

Under Rule 16 of the Travancore Legislative Rules, I beg to lay on the table the following statement of expenditure authorised by the Government under Section 32 of Act II of 1108.

Demand.	Amount in Rupees.	Particulars.
III. 36. Buildings, Communications, etc.	14,280	For widening and improving the approach road to Padmanabhapuram Palace.
VII. 20. Administration of Justice.	2,080	For constructing a side room and dais for the Village Panchayat Court, Thiruvalla.
X. 7. Taxes on Income.	13,500	For the reorganisation of the Income Tax Department.
XXXI. 35. Miscellaneous Department excluding Radio Broadcasting expenditure by the Electrical Department.	9,466-2-0	For the purchase of Zoo animals